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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 004946

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

Putin: A Blue Cruise Changed My View of Turks - Hurriyet
Putin: PM Erdogan is a man of his word - Sabah
Putin: My Views Changed on my visit to Antalya - Aksam
A New Era with Russia - Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

Islamic World Stands up for French Journalists - Zaman
The Penal Code Debate - Yeni Safak
Adultery Issue: What is the State's Business in Our Bedrooms
- Radikal
Credit Cards Become a Scapegoat for Current Account Deficit
- Referans
Bargaining with Russia - Ortadogu
Putin comes with economic agenda - Dunya

BRIEFING

Putin due in Turkey: Turkey is getting ready to host a Russian leader for the first time in 32 years. Russian President Putin is expected to arrive in Ankara on September 12. There will be a welcoming ceremony by Turkish President Sezer the same day. Following talks between delegations of the two countries, a number of agreements and documents are expected to be signed. Putin will later travel with PM Erdogan to the Aegean city of Izmir. Putin will meet Turkish and Russian businessmen the same day and will depart from Turkey in a Russian warship. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov will accompany Putin on the visit. Papers report that developments in the Caucasus and Central Asian republics will be discussed during the visit. The issue of energy and shipping of Russian gas to Europe via the Blue Stream pipeline are other topics for discussion. FM Gul said on Tuesday that Turkey is buying a significant amount of natural gas from Russia, and added that there would also be new pipelines. Tanker traffic in the Straits will be one of the most important topics on the bilateral agenda. Ankara is expected to remind the Russians that 135 million tons of oil pass through the straits each year, and note that this figure will increase by 50 percent in 2010 when Kazakh oil will also be sent through the straits. Ankara will stress that alternatives must be found for delivering this oil to Western markets. Chechen separatism and Russia's alleged support for the terrorist PKK/Kongra Gel will also be discussed. Speaking to the Russian Interfax news agency ahead of Putin's visit, PM Erdogan said that Turkey wants 'a fundamental solution to the Chechen question within the framework of Russia's territorial integrity, reached by peaceful means and with a consideration for human rights.' Both Moscow and Ankara support a broader role for the United Nations in Iraq. Putin is also expected to press for Turkish agreement to purchase Russian-Israeli attack helicopters. (Note: Turkish MFA spokesman Namik Tan told journalists this afternoon that the Putin visit is expected to go ahead as scheduled despite the continuing hostage situation in Russia. End Note.)

FM Gul on Iraq, PKK: Speaking to the private news channel NTV, Turkish FM Gul said that Turkey is an important country in meeting the needs of the Iraqi people. Harming Turks in Iraq had a cost, Gul said, stating that everyone should take this into consideration. Gul said that the Iraqi people should not allow malicious acts against Turks. Gul noted that nearly 3,000 trucks passed through from the Habur border crossing into Iraq every day. Commenting on the PKK/Kongra-Gel, Gul said that Turkey would not transfer responsibility for the fight against terrorism to another country. 'Turkey knows how to deal with this problem,' he said. Gul added that the US has not yet carried out a

military operation against the terrorist organization. Asked whether Turkish troops could launch a cross-border operation against the PKK, Gul said Turkey would 'do what is necessary' for its own security.

AKP delegation in Israel: AK Party lawmakers Omer Celik, Egemen Bagis, Saban Disli, and Mevlut Cavusoglu are currently in Israel at the official invitation of the Israeli government. AK Party delegation leader Disli said that there is no tension between Turkey and Israel. Replying to questions on the first day of the group's visit to Jerusalem, Disli said, 'this an ordinary visit -- it has no special purpose.' 'We will exchange views, and look for answers to questions that concern us.' On Tuesday, Turkish lawmakers met with Israeli FM Shalom. Omer Celik expressed the delegation's condolences for the families of those killed or wounded in the suicide bombings yesterday in Israel. "Yeni Safak" speculates that the AK Party deputies have asked Israeli officials to allow Turkish observers during Israel's withdrawal from Palestinian land. Delegation members rejected allegations by the press that their visit to Israel had been undertaken because of warnings by President Bush to PM Erdogan on the need to repair the strain in Turkish-Israeli ties. Turkish papers speculate that the visit is an effort to test the ground for a prospective visit to Israel by FM Gul. The delegation is scheduled to hold talks with Palestinian officials before returning to Turkey.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Iraq/French Journalists; EU/Turkey

"The Reason Iraq is not going to be a second Vietnam"
Mine G. Kirikkanat argued in the liberal-intellectual "Radikal" (9/1): "The current situation in Iraq presents a very confused picture as far as tribes, ethnic groups and religious communities is concerned. All of them -- with the exception of the Kurds, who support the US - are standing against the occupiers. But a lack of unity and discipline has led to the development of a disorganized guerrilla movement. Unlike Iraq, in Vietnam there was a solid ideological and national unity when the resistance fought against the American occupation. . From this point of view, Iraq is now being controlled by local and foreign terrorist organizations, including some who do not have any real goal or purpose other than the pursuit of violence for its own sake. Terrorist organizations linked to al-Qaeda have the largest role in Iraq, but they don't really care about freeing Iraq from the occupation. On the contrary, the growing chaos serves their interests to turn Iraq into a staging ground for international terrorism. So Iraq is not going to be another Vietnam. . It seems that a better parallel may be Chechnya. If the French journalists are murdered, and possibly even if they are not, the independent press will begin pulling out of Iraq. In the long run, international opinion will become distant to the Iraq issue. This will lead to a number of consequences, including a silence about US actions in Iraq. This will be similar to what Russia has been able to do in Chechnya, shielded from public view."

"US support for the EU accession"
Sami Kohen noted in the mass appeal Milliyet (9/1): "A recent report issued by Atlantic Council, an American think-tank organization, depicts very clearly the US position regarding Turkey's possible EU accession. The report concludes that it would be very much Turkey's, EU's as well as the US's interests when EU gives a date for negotiations and starts the membership process for Turkey. A negative decision about giving Turkey a negotiation date has serious potential consequences for all three sides. As the report notes, Turkey's accession to the European Union will be an important development and not only for the EU, for the US as well. . Turkey's EU membership is an exciting project for the US because Washington considers a strong and democratic Turkey in the region as part of its immediate interests. . The Atlantic Council's report provides a clear explanation about the reason for US support for Turkey's EU vision, and also provides a good guidance for both EU Commission as well as the US administration about the ways to achieve the goal in the right format."

EDELMAN